

Domestic Violence Awareness Month
Message to all City of Seattle staff from Mayor Greg Nickels
October 4, 2006

Dear Friends:

In our city and in communities all across our country, domestic violence traumatizes its victims, endangers children, and harms families.

During October — Domestic Violence Awareness Month — I call upon all residents of Seattle to help victims and prevent this grave social ill.

Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, psychological and financial. All domestic violence behavior involves gaining and maintaining power and control in an intimate relationship. It occurs in any type of relationship — married, separated, divorced, dating, straight or gay. It involves people of all races, socio-economic classes and ages, and spills into our schools and our work places.

Nationally, domestic violence is epidemic. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, a million women are affected each year. Group Health Cooperative research shows that one in every two women insured by the co-op here in Washington State has experienced domestic violence at some time in their life.

The Seattle Police Department receives more than 12,000 emergency domestic violence calls each year, and more than 1,000 women apply for protection orders each year. Because domestic violence is considered a private affair, people do not realize how widespread it is. Many domestic violence crimes are never reported.

One of my priorities is building strong families and healthy communities. Seattle has worked hard to reduce domestic violence by coordinating how we respond to and help victims and their families. These efforts involve staff from the Police Department; the City Attorney's Office, the Seattle Municipal Court and the Human Services Department, all working together with local victims' advocates and community-based organizations to better help victims and prosecute offenders.

These programs are making a difference in our community, but it is not enough. To succeed — to build safety for families and children — we need to expand our efforts to include everyone in our community. This means community leaders, church leaders, service providers, teachers and employers.

Please take time to learn more about this problem and how you can help reduce and prevent domestic violence in our community. For more information about

domestic violence and Domestic Violence Awareness Month events in the community, visit www.seattle.gov/humanservices/dv/default.htm . To view the public service announcement for Domestic Violence Awareness Month created by Seattle Channel, visit www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=7010607 .

Sincerely,

GREG NICKELS
City of Seattle